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ABSTRACT

This workshop seeks to train persons interested in counseling those who have suffered traumatic loss. The training comes about in part by the participants' introspection into their own past trauma reactions and the coping strategies they used. They also learn from the shared experiences of other participants. The goals of this workshop are to 1) discuss the major dimensions of grief experienced by the participants, 2) have participants reflect on their own awareness of death, grief, and multiculturalism, 3) share experiences with other workshop participants, and 4) return home with more personal awareness of coping with traumatic loss. Multicultural issues are addressed in relation to trauma and how to counsel victims of different nationalities and cultural backgrounds. Inventories for use throughout the workshop are included. (ADT)

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THE 22ND INTERNATIONAL DEATH, GRIEF, AND BEREAVEMENT CONFERENCE
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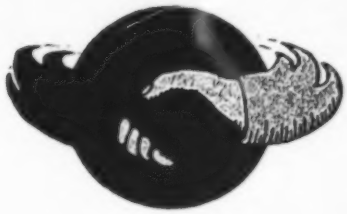
COPING WITH TRAUMATIC LOSS



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- **THE WORKSHOP'S MAJOR LEARNING PRINCIPLE:**

  - Participants "learn more effectively when they relate new information to the things they already know" (Ormrod, 2002, p. 15). Consequently, that educational psychological principle will guide this workshop. There will be opportunities for participants' introspection, for connecting personal grief experiences with information assimilated in the workshop. In addition, participants who so desire will be encouraged to share experiences.

- **GOALS OF THIS INTROSPECTIVE/INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP**

  - Learn about the school psychology and American Red Cross crisis intervention experiences and coping reactions of the workshop presenter
  - Discuss the major dimensions of grief by introspecting about your past trauma reactions and coping strategies
  - Introspect about your personal awareness of death, grief, and multiculturalism
  - Share experiences with the other workshop participants
  - Return home with more personal awareness of coping with traumatic loss

- **PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES OF THE WORKSHOP PRESENTER**

  - Retired School Psychologist With 28 Years Experience
    - Provided intervention after accidental, suicidal, and homicidal deaths
  - American Red Cross Disaster Mental Health Volunteer
    - Provided intervention after disasters: tornado, wildfire, aircraft, terrorist, tropical storm, flood, workplace shooting, fire, and school bus accident.

➢ COPING WITH TRAUMATIC LOSS – THE TRAUMA COPING INVENTORY

In reacting to a traumatic experience as a survivor or as a co-victim, how did you cope? Or, if you were not a survivor or co-victim but helped others, how did you cope (i.e., any secondary traumatization)? Read each of the following characteristics and put a check mark under "Yes" if it applied to you and "No" if it did not. The information is cited from Pearlman and Saakvitne (1995) and from Rando (1988). The workshop presenter also added some of the characteristics to the partial and overlapping list. This workshop presenter selected and organized the information into the following question format:

▪ HOW DID YOU COPE COGNITIVELY?

	Yes	No
o Changed assumptions about the self and the world		
o Distrustful		
o Loss of safety		
o Lessened power or control		
o Loss of Independence		
o Decreased self-esteem		
o Blocked intimacy feelings		
o Impaired concentration		
o Impaired decision-making ability		
o Self-blame		
o Flashbacks		
o Nightmares		
o Dissociation ("spacey" feeling)		
o Lowered self-efficacy		
o Memory impairment		
o Confusion		
o Worry		
o Fear of reoccurrence of the trauma		
o Other		

▪ HOW DID YOU COPE EMOTIONALLY?

	Yes	No
o Internalized the stress (i.e., depression)		
o Externalized the stress (i. e. aggression)		
o Fear and anxiety		
o Guilt		
o Blame		
o Anger		

	Yes	No
o Sadness		
o Loss of faith		
o Illegitimate, legitimate and/or survivor guilt		
o Separation pain, sorrow, and longing		
o Disorganization		
o Depression and despair		
o Diminished self-concern		
o Obsession with the trauma		
o Sense of vulnerability		
o Searching for meaning		
o Identification		
o Grief spasms		
o Shock		
o Terror		
o Irritability		
o Emotional numbing		
o Helplessness		
o Loss of interest in familiar activities		
o Avoidance		
o Other		

- **HOW DID YOU COPE SOCIALLY (INTERPERSONALLY)?**

	Yes	No
o Restlessness		
o Little or no interest in usual activities		
o Lack of energy and motivation		
o Bored or impatient with others		
o Withdrawal from others		
o Decreased satisfaction		
o Preoccupied with one's grief		
o Fearful about being alone		
o Related to others to avoid thinking of the deceased		
o Distrustful of others		
o Increased relational conflict		
o Reduced relational intimacy		
o Alienation		
o Impaired work performance		
o Impaired school performance		
o Blaming others		
o Other		

- **HOW DID YOU COPE PHYSICALLY?**

	Yes	No
o Fought, fled, or froze		
o Fatigue, exhaustion		
o Apathy		
o Lethargy		
o Sleep difficulties		
o Tearfulness and crying		
o Weight loss or weight gain		
o Teeth grinding		
o Nail-biting		
o Feeling that something was stuck in your throat		
o Heart palpitations, trembling, shaking		
o Shortness of breath		
o Dizziness		
o Unsteady feelings		
o Chest pain, pressure, or discomfort		
o Headaches		
o Gastrointestinal upset		
o Startle response		
o Hyperarousal		
o Nightmares		
o Exaggerated startle response		
o Reduced immune response		
o Vulnerability to illness		
o Other		

- **HOW DID YOU COPE BEHAVIORALLY?**

	Yes	No
o Avoidance		
o Social withdrawal		
o Decreased intimacy and lowered trust in others		
o Aggression		
o Substance abuse		
o Regression		
o Dysfunctional behavior		
o Eating less or more		
o Sleep problems		
o Other		

- **HOW DID YOU COPE SPIRITUALLY?**

	Yes	No
o With no spiritual support		
o God had nothing to do with it		
o Loss of faith in religion		
o Angry at God or other deity (religious founder)		
o Blaming God or other deity (religious founder)		
o The trauma was given as a punishment		

➢ INNER AND OUTER COPING RESOURCES (STRATEGIES) – THE TRAUMA COPING RESOURCE INVENTORY

In reacting to a traumatic experience as a survivor or as a co-victim, how did you use resources to cope? Or, if you were not a survivor or co-victim but helped others, how did you use strategies to cope? Read each of the following resources and respond in three ways: (1) put a check mark under "Yes" if the strategy was a support for you, and "No" if it were not; (2) underline the specific resources you used for coping; and (3) circle the specific resource(s) you hope to use in the future. Feel free to comment on or add to each category, or create a new one. The information is cited from Rothschild (2000), Drescher & Foy (1995), and the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (retrieved February 2003). Also, the workshop presenter added some strategies to the partial and overlapping list and selected and organized the information into the following format:

	Yes	No
o **Functional/practical resources** – shelter, food/nourishment, water, safety/protection, clothing, sleep, communication with loved ones, etc.		
o **Physical resources** – health, physical strength and agility, exercise, body awareness, somatic memory, body psychotherapy, medication, etc.		
o **Psychological resources** – high, intelligence, sense of humor, curiosity, creativity, resiliency, relief at surviving the tragedy, greater self-worth, changes in the way the client views the future, feelings of 'growing' from the experience, dual awareness, "telling your story," calming images (attentive oasis activities such as a new hobby, and concrete anchors such as a person, animal, safe place, object, or activity), verbal psychotherapy, debriefings, active coping style, mental health, good self-regulation of emotion, appealing and sociable, positive self-efficacy, positive self-confidence, positive self-esteem, internal locus of control, and task-oriented.		

	Yes	No
o **Interpersonal (social) resources**- spouse or partner, living with family member, extended family relations/guidance, connections with other family members, friends, pets, and recollections of significant people from the client's past, making contact with loved ones, access to positive role models, connection with pro-social institutions, altruism (helping and comforting others), and participating in cultural beliefs and rituals.		
o **Spiritual resources**- belief in a higher power, following a religious figure, adherence to religious practice, regaining a sense of faith, hope, purpose, and meaning, spiritual autobiographies, meditation, prayer, guided imagery, yoga, involvement in religious rituals, mind-body disciplines, service to others, community spirit, and communing with nature, discussion of the key theological and existential issues, i.e., reconciling the existence of God with the presence of evil and suffering in the world, reading spiritual literature, i. e. Bible, meeting with others in a "spiritual fellowship," and forgiving self and others.		
o **Other resources** _____		

➢ DEATH, GRIEF, AND MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS

o Death Awareness Questions

- What was the first death that you can remember? _____

  Explain your reactions: _____

  _____

  _____

- What was the most recent death that you can remember? _____

  Explain your reactions: _____

  _____

  _____

- What was your most effective coping resource? _____

  _____

  _____

  _____

- Did you experience other types of personal losses other than the deaths of important individuals in your life? Yes ____ No _____ Explain _____

  _____

  _____

  _____

- Did you enter therapy after important persons in your life died? Yes ____No ____

  If so, were you also coping with other personal losses simultaneously? Explain

  _____

  _____

- **Grief Awareness Questions (for Trauma Survivors or Co-Victims)**

- Do you know if your body remembered a traumatic experience that was unknown to your conscious mind? Yes____ No ____ Explain _____

_____

_____

- Were you able to recognize that the experience happened in the past even though it felt as though it was happening in the present? Yes ____ No _____ Explain ___

_____

_____

- Did you respond to the trauma by fighting, fleeing, or freezing? _____

Explain _____

_____

_____

- Did you experience a later internal state that replicated the internal state produced during a previous traumatic event? Yes___ No___ Explain _____

_____

_____

- In responding to trauma, did you consider your inner and outer resources as well as the trauma? Yes ____ No ____ Explain _____

_____

_____

- If you participated in therapy after experiencing the trauma, did you select verbal psychotherapy, body-psychotherapy, or both? _____ Explain _____

_____

_____

- **Grief Awareness Questions (for Helpers of Survivors or Co-Victims)**

- Did you help a client's whose body remembered a traumatic experience that was unknown to his/her conscious mind? Yes ____ No____ Explain. _____

_____

_____

- Did you help a client whose experience happened in the past even though he/she felt as though it were happening in the present? Yes ____ No ____ Explain

_____

_____

- Did you help a client who reacted to trauma by fighting, fleeing, or freezing? Yes ____ No ____ Explain _____

_____

_____

- Did you help a client whose later internal state replicated an internal state produced during a previous traumatic event? Yes ___ No___ Explain. _____

_____

_____

- In helping a client, did you consider his/her inner and outer resources as well as the trauma? Yes ____ No ____ Explain _____

_____

_____

- As a helper, do you believe in verbal psychotherapy, body-psychotherapy, or both? _____ Explain _____

_____

_____

- **Multicultural Awareness Questions**

- How many individuals from cultural, racial, or religious backgrounds very different from your own have you personally or professionally known who have died? _____ Explain. _____

_____

- In relating to an individual from another culture, are you aware of how your expectations and biases may affect the relationship? If so, in what way? _____

_____

_____

- Do you prevent yourself from lumping together individuals from different ethnic diverse groups, and are you aware of the important individual differences within each group and within each person within the group? Yes ____ No ____ Explain.

_____

_____

- Do you avoid applying Western ethnocentric concepts to understand and help individuals from other cultures? Have you experienced this? Yes ____ No _____

If so, explain _____

_____

Are you aware of using culturally sensitive verbal and nonverbal communication? Yes ____ No ____What experiences have you had? _____

_____

_____

- Are you cognizant of the meaning the culture applies to trauma, death, grief, and treatment? Yes ___ No ___What intercultural experiences have you encountered?

_____

_____

Note: The previous Death, Grief, and Multicultural Awareness Introspective Questions' exercise has as its models (1) D. P. Irish, K. P. Lundquist, & V J. Nelsen's (Eds.) 1993 book, Ethnic Variations in Dying, Death, and Grief: Diversity in Universality, published by Taylor & Francis in Washington, DC; and (2) J. W. Worden 's 1991 book, Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy: A Handbook for the Mental Health Practitioner (2nd ed), published by Springer in New York.

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